

Project Summary Sheet

Project Name: Santa Clara River Flood Protection Project

Tracking No: 200784108

Location: Santa Clara River. McGrath Property Address: 5100 Olivas Park Drive, Ventura CA 93003. Coultas Property Address: 5030 W. Gonzalez Road, Oxnard, CA 93031

County: Ventura

Project Sponsor: The Nature Conservancy

Point of Contact: E.J. Remson

Co-applicant(s): None

Assembly District: #35

Senate District: #19

Project Summary: The applicant is asking for funding to help in acquiring 2 properties near the mouth of the Santa Clara River. The total cost for acquisition (listed below as total project cost) would be \$13,818,350. Property would be acquired in fee, but would include a Conditional Irrevocable Offer to Dedicate fee title to the Coastal Conservancy that would prevent urbanization and would allow floodplain restoration. If the conditions of the offer are violated, the Coastal Conservancy would take title.

The J.D. McGrath property acquisition of about 145 acres (including grant required studies and administration) would cost \$7,599,175. The Coultas Ranch property acquisition of about 140 acres (including grant required studies and administration) would cost \$6,219,175.

Levee removal on only the McGrath property, located on the north side of the river, would have very little affect on water surface elevations. The Coultas property is located on the south side of the river and is more important to the goal of restoration of the river channel to 1938 width, and would provide greater flood benefits than the McGrath property.

If only the Coultas property were to be acquired, acquisition of 2 properties to the west would also need to occur before river/floodplain restoration could occur. Removal of south bank levees from the Coultas property to the Harbor Blvd Bridge in the model showed a decrease in water surface elevation of approximately 6 ft for the 10-year flood event and over 7 ft for the 50- and 100-year flood events. Removal of levees from the

Coultas property to Harbor Blvd Bridge decreased flow velocities by over 3 ft/sec for the 10-year flood event and by almost 7 ft/sec for the 50- and 100-year flood events.

The Nature Conservancy offered that if the two properties west of the Coultas property were not purchased within a reasonable amount of time, they would remove the levees on the Coultas property only. However, this would only reduce the flood elevation by 2 feet during a 50-100 year flood event and cause a decrease in flow velocity of approximately 1 ft/sec for the 10-year flood event and over 1 ft/sec for the 50- and 100-year flood events.

The overall goal of Santa Clara River restoration within Ventura County---in addition to preventing urban development---would cause a conversion of land from agriculture to floodplain and riparian habitat. The amount agricultural land lost cannot be determined until hydraulic and hydrologic studies are done. Some agriculture will be maintained.

Flood Benefits: The immediate benefit in acquisition would be in preventing future urban development on the property that would get flooded or result in downstream flooding. In the time between acquisition and large scale restoration, small-scale restoration on the McGrath property is possible. The extent of the small scale restoration activities will depend upon the availability of funds. The Coultas levee would be removed after two additional properties to the west are acquired. Any expansion of the floodplain would allow more floodwater to be held for transitory storage. This would reduce the possibility of downstream flooding of the Ventura Waste Treatment Plant, Ventura Harbor, McGrath State Beach, golf courses, 320 acres of residences, and 1,300 acres of agriculture.

The applicant lists that in the short term, the Project would reduce taxpayer costs by \$2,000,000 because of eliminating the need to construct a levee on one of the properties. Flood reduction benefits for different flood recurrence intervals have not been calculated. The estimated damage due to a 35-year flood today is \$104,000,000.

See questions 1, 6, and 13 below for more flood benefit information.

Agricultural Benefits: The immediate benefit would be to protect agricultural areas from being developed. The short term benefits are that agriculture will be continued with a 10-year lease. In the long term some agricultural areas will be lost due to floodplain restoration, but some agriculture will remain. The amount to remain is unknown.

Agricultural Land Conserved: 200 acres will remain until restoration occurs. The amount of agriculture lost due to restoration is unknown.

Wildlife Benefits: The river has many native, special status, and other wildlife species. The immediate benefit would be to prevent riparian habitat from being reclaimed for

agriculture or urban development. The short term and long term parts of the project would provide more channel and riparian habitat for these species.

Wildlife Habitat Conserved: 80 acres (acquisition)

Total area conserved: 280 acres (acquisition)

Other Benefits: Water quality benefits include groundwater recharge and some conversion of conventional agriculture to organic. The river/floodplain restoration is supported by a variety of agencies and conservation groups.

Total Cost: \$13,818,350 (acquisition)

FPCP Cost: \$5,000,000

Funding Partners and Share of Cost: Committed cost-share funding in the amount of \$6,318,350 and cost-share funding that is not yet committed in the amount of \$2,500,000. See question 2c for more funding information.

Additional Questions:

1. Is there a full hydrologic and hydraulic report with the application or is there simply an engineer's opinion? Either way, what is the conclusion as to the anticipated flood benefits of the project?

A hydraulic report with hydraulic modeling and results was provided. Hydrologic information was provided in a separate document. Levee removal on the McGrath property, located on the north side of the river, had very little affect on water surface elevations. Removal of the Coultas levee, located on the south side of the river, would reduce the flood elevation by 2 feet during a 50-100 year flood event. Removal of south bank levees from the Coultas property to the Harbor Blvd Bridge in the model showed a decrease in water surface elevation of approximately 6 ft for the 10-year flood event and over 7 ft for the 50- and 100-year flood events.

Coultas levee removal resulted in a decrease in flow velocity of approximately 1 ft/sec for the 10-year flood event and over 1 ft/sec for the 50- and 100-year flood events. Removal of levees from the Coultas property to Harbor Blvd Bridge decreased flow velocities by over 3 ft/sec for the 10-year flood event and by almost 7 ft/sec for the 50- and 100-year flood events. There was no information provided with regards to flow velocity reduction due to removal of the McGrath property levee.

Additional modeling was done. See question 13a below.

2. What exactly will the FPCP funds pay for?

FPCP would provide partial funding for fee acquisition of 2 properties, McGrath and Coultas, totaling 280 acres.

- a. If the project applicant indicated they could accept less funding, what (if anything) would be cut from the project? What is lost by providing less FPCP grant money?

Total project cost (including acquisition of both properties and grant required studies and reports) is \$13,818,350. The applicant stated that the FPCP would provide significant portion of our funding and without this funding they would have to find funding to replace it.

- b. Does the applicant have access to alternate funding to replace the amount deducted from their request so that they can still spend the total amount they requested? If so, what would be the alternate funding source(s) and is the alternate funding already allocated, promised or committed?

The applicant does not have access to alternate funding.

- c. When giving a project score credit for matching funds, how much of the funding is matched? What is the source of the matching funds and are the matching funds already committed?

State Coastal Conservancy	5,000,000 – committed
US Fish and Wildlife Service	750,000 – committed
River Parkways	476,000 – committed
In Kind – State Coastal Conservancy	20,000 – committed
In Kind – The Nature Conservancy	72,350 – committed

The committed match is \$6,318,350. This is about 46% of the total cost for both acquisitions. It is 102% of the Coultas acquisition, with a remaining \$99,175. It is 83% of the McGrath acquisition.

Santa Clara River Trustee Council	1,500,000 – pursuing
Wildlife Conservation Board	1,000,000 – pursuing

The total amount of match being pursued is \$2,500,000, about 18% of the total.

3. If there is FPCP funding requested for acquisition of property, is the type of ownership in easement, fee title, or both easement and fee title? Who will own the easement and/or fee title?

Both properties would be acquired in fee and would be owned by The Nature Conservancy. There would be a Conditional Irrevocable Offer to Dedicate that would act like a conservation easement that would be included within the deed in

that if the conditions of use of the property are violated, fee title would pass to the Coastal Conservancy.

4. Does any portion of the project site have mitigation bank potential for DWR to gain mitigation credits for its maintenance program? (Note: Mitigation property would need to be within 40 miles of the disturbance area that needs to be mitigated)

Not applicable.

5. Is the project USACE authorized under the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA)? If so, is there USACE funding for the project pursuant to WRDA? Should the USACE be fully funding the project?

This is not a USACE authorized project.

6. Can the management of transitory water storage on the site be optimized for flood benefit? Can the project be designed to retain floodwater? Is the applicant willing to work with DWR on the timing of water management during extreme flood events?

The project includes the passive holding of flood water through floodplain restoration. It does not include active retention of flood water.

7. Who will do the maintenance?

The Nature Conservancy staff would monitor the property for trespass and trash in the interim between acquisition and floodplain restoration. After restoration TNC would hire a consultant to conduct monitoring of vegetation and other indicators of ecosystem health. This includes invasive plant removal.

8. How do the proposed property acquisitions fit in with other conservation properties in the area?

See Map 2 and Map 4 for other areas conserved. In Map 2 'Under Contract' means that the applicant has an executed contract to purchase the property. Some of those properties have been purchased since the grant application was completed.

The applicant is working with several agencies on a plan that would help alleviate the low flow flooding problem to the McGrath State Beach by utilizing the south bank levee setback areas to reduce the low flow.

There is no intention to acquire the County properties. The County land outside of the floodplain is not expected to change. This land currently contains a capped landfill and golf course. The golf course is heavily used. TNC intends to approach the County about restoration of the river channel portion of their lands. They

currently have a cooperative restoration project in progress with the County in this reach of the river (the rectangular-shaped parcel in Map 4).

9. The general goal is to restore the Santa Clara River roughly within the boundaries of Ventura County. Is there a name for this overall project? Is there a planning document that has been written that explains the components of this overall project?

The name of the overall project is 'The Nature Conservancy's Santa Clara River and Coasts Project'. There is an existing document called the 'Santa Clara River - Upper Watershed Conservation Plan'. There will be a similar plan for the lower Santa Clara River. This plan was just finished is being signed off by upper management. It will be available for DWR review after their approval. This plan has been prepared and reviewed by many conservation partners including several Federal agencies, State agencies, local agencies and non-profit organizations. The State Coastal Conservancy also has prepared a River Parkway Plan they are currently implementing. This project (as outlined in the application) is part of that plan.

10. Would it be possible to use FPCP funding and secured funding listed above to fund the acquisition and levee setback on the Coultas property? How much funding would be needed for the levee setback? Please include all aspects of levee setback, including deconstruction, construction, permitting, environmental review, etc.

The applicant stated that a levee setback on Coultas alone would not work well. All of the properties on the south side that include Coultas, Judge McGrath, and Coastal Berry should be purchased and then levee setbacks would occur on all properties at the same time. This would make the setback less complicated and less expensive.

If the applicant is unable to complete the other acquisitions in a reasonable time, they will proceed with the setback work on the properties on the south side of the river that they would have acquired at that time. They are willing to include this in the grant agreement, if the project is funded.

Although a full levee setback might not occur immediately, they would allow the levee bank on the Coultas property to erode and not be repaired in the interim between purchasing the properties and the setback.

Both TNC and the State Coastal Conservancy are committed to the acquiring the rest of the property and expanding the floodplain area by levee setback. They are engaging other partners for this levee setback, including the US Fish and Wildlife Service and City of Ventura.

11. When is it anticipated that the Coastal Berry and Judge McGrath parcels, that are both downstream from the Coultas property, will be acquired? Are these parcels next on the list for acquisition or would there be acquisition of other properties first? If these properties are acquired, will all southern levees from Coultas to the ocean be set back soon thereafter or will all properties in the County be acquired first?

The goal is to purchase the properties downstream from Coultas as soon as possible. They have been prioritized as the next properties to purchase.

The Coultas family is related to the Judge McGrath family and leases land from them. They have offered to help the applicant with the negotiations to speed up the process. The applicant is already negotiating with Coastal Berry through a broker.

12. Is there an Option owned by TNC for either property? If so, when does it expire? If there is one, can the Coultas Option be held until all of the other properties to the west can be purchased?

The options on both properties are currently being finalized. Both options would expire at the end of the year.

13. Please provide specific information on the past flooding and expected flood reduction due to the project.

- a. Provide information on how the project would reduce the depth of flooding to each important area (harbor, sewage plant, McGrath State Beach, golf course, etc.). Specify the flood recurrence interval (i.e. 200-year, 100-year, 50-year, etc).

See the attached table.

- b. How would Coultas and all levee removal (Coultas and properties to the west) decrease the damage of flooding to each important area? Please provide information for various flood recurrence intervals.

The 1969 flood was approximately a 35-year flood. The rough estimate provided of flood damage due to the 1969 flood is:

- McGrath State Beach \$1.0M
- Ventura WWTP \$25.0M (not including impacts of sewage discharge)
- Structures at Marina \$20.0M
- Marina Facilities & dredging \$10.0M
- Commercial Boats \$40.0M
- Pleasure Boats \$5.0M
- Vehicles in parking areas \$1.0M

- Utility damage \$2.0M

Total damage estimate (order of magnitude) \$104,000,000

There is no information on flood damage reduction at different flood recurrence intervals at this time.

14. If FPCP could provide \$5,000,000 for purchase of the Coultas property, could the other committed cost-share funding be used to purchase the Coultas property immediately?

The property would be acquired immediately. Closing would occur after the funds are received and all required acquisitions are completed.